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Prosthesis and the performance of beginnings in *The Woman in the Moon*

In his seminal study, *Prosthesis*, David Wills finds 'one type of beginning' for prosthesis in a reference to this term in a marginal gloss that appears in Thomas Wilson's *The Art of Rhetorique* (1553).[1] At the time of Wills' writing, this 1553 allusion to prosthesis was the first known use of the word in its earliest grammatical sense of 'the addition of a letter or syllable to the beginning of a word' (*OED*). Wills draws heavily on the 'marginality' of grammatical prosthesis in *The Art of Rhetorique*, noting that Wilson treats it as a dangerously foreign other that generates 'illicit couplings' between linguistic bodies, or 'the prostitution of language'.[2] In particular, Wills interprets Wilson's disdain for prosthesis as a dislike of artifice that, at root, reflects Reformation fears about idolatry and the difficulty of returning, via the destruction of images, 'to a form of divine presence that preceded figural representation'.[3] In this view, prosthesis is not just a rhetorical term, it is a figure that signifies any act of artificial construction and is thus a source of anxiety in a reformist view. Because Wills focuses so extensively on Wilson, this anxious response to prosthesis comes to stand, in *Prosthesis*, for sixteenth-century English Protestant thought on this figure more broadly. Moreover, Wilson's anxieties about prosthesis as an artificial barrier to an unknowable divine destination seep into Wills' broader, Derridean account of prosthesis as a 'figure of inconsistency … hobbling uneasily towards some unknown that it knows it will never reach'.[4] Significantly, however, Wilson's concerns about prosthesis are the product of a specific historical context, in that this writer rose to prominence during the reign of Edward VI, a period characterised by 'evangelical' Protestantism and unprecedented levels of iconoclasm.[5] What sixteenth-century attitudes to prosthesis might we uncover by focusing on alternative examples from this period? And how might these alternatives shape our

contemporary responses to prosthesis?

This essay addresses these questions through discussion of a text from the latter part of the sixteenth century: John Lyly's *The Woman in the Moon*. Although this play was first published in 1597, it is thought that Lyly may have written it for performance by Paul's boys, a company of boy actors, in or before 1590.[6] The drama is set in the fictional world of 'Utopia', and tells the story of the creation of a woman named Pandora by a female personification of Nature, whom Lyly figures as a sculptor.[7] Lyly does not use the word 'prosthesis' in this play, but his depiction of divine creation contributes to a defence of the spiritual significance of prosthesis as an artificial performance of beginnings. In this way, Lyly's play diverges significantly from the attitude to prosthesis that Wills attributes to early modern English Protestantism in his reading of Wilson. Where Wills contends that reformists are troubled by prosthesis as the sign of 'the construction of the artificial within the origin itself', *The Woman in the Moon* demonstrates that such prosthetic artifice plays a crucial role in earthly understanding of divine origins.[8] Just as he does not refer to the term 'prosthesis', Lyly also does not address and critique Wilson directly, although it is likely that, as the grandson of the grammarian William Lily, the dramatist would have known *The Art of Rhetorique*, which went through several editions in the late sixteenth century.[9] Instead, in *The Woman in the Moon*, Lyly refutes what might be loosely termed 'anti-prosthetic' discourse, to which Wilson contributes, and which in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries emerges especially in anti-theatrical and anti-cosmetic polemical writing.

This discourse figures prosthesis as a mode of artificial construction equivalent to idolatry, in the early modern sense of 'worship of the creature in place of the Creator'.[10] In this way, anti-prosthetic writers echo the attitude to prosthesis as an idolatrous other that Wills finds in his reading of Wilson. The anti-theatrical writer Stephen Gosson, for

example, attacks theatre as a prosthetic, false performance of self that contradicts the view that 'euery man must show him selfe outwardly to be such as in deed he is'.[11] Gosson attacks players' display of 'outward signs', which can include 'words or gestures', but also 'the attyre … gesture' and 'passions' of others; his primary objections here are to 'a boy' presented as 'a woman', or to 'a mean person' who takes 'the title of a Prince with counterfeit porte, and traine'.[12] In Gosson's view, these false, 'outward signes' corrupt the relationship between man and God, as they constitute a rejection of divinely-created being, and show 'disdaine' for 'the wisedome of our maker and the calling he has placed us in'.[13] Similarly, the anti-cosmetic writer Thomas Tuke poses a series of rhetorical questions about face painting that frame women users of cosmetics as idolaters:

> What a contempt of God is this, to preferre the worke of thine owne finger to the worke of God? What impietie is it to goe about to haue that thought that Gods, which is thine owne? What iniustice to conceale his worke, and ostent thine owne, and indeed to spoile his with thine owne?[14]

Tuke's attack on cosmetics as artificial additions to divinely created bodies reflects the anxiety 'that God's workmanship is being altered' by the use of such prostheses.[15] As in Gosson's attack on performance, and in the Protestant anxieties about prosthesis as a barrier to divine truth that Wills identifies, Tuke objects to prosthetic supplementation as a practice that idolatrously distorts our understanding of divine creation.

A further important feature of this anti-prosthetic discourse is the expression of the idolatry of prosthesis in terms of sexual transgression. This aspect of this discourse builds on the biblical equation between idolatry and adultery, and registers, for example, in the association between prosthesis and prostitution that Wills emphasises in his reading of Wilson.[16] This association echoes in the works of Tuke, Gosson and other polemical writers from the period. For example, another of Tuke's rhetorical questions asks whether face-painting is the 'tricke of a wanton … to procure and tie the eies of

people to thee, or to gaine some *vnfortunate seruant*?'[17] Similarly, Gosson concludes that just as 'Playes are … the offrings of Idolatrie' so they are the 'the foode of iniquitie, ryot, and adulterie'.[18] Writing on transvestism, meanwhile, Gosson describes the adoption of the 'manifest signes of another sex' as a mode of forgerie that adulterates the 'word of God'.[19] Similarly, Gosson's fellow antitheatrical writer Phillip Stubbes claims that a man who cross-dresses will 'adulterate the veritie of his owne kinde'.[20] These complaints about the supposed moral and corporeal corruption that the adoption of artificial 'outward signs' might cause are especially pertinent for *The Woman in the Moon*, which was most likely performed by boys wearing devices such as 'prosthetic beards' and cosmetics as they took the roles of adult male and female characters.[21] Scholars have devoted significant attention to anti-theatrical and anti-cosmetic writing in studies of the 'prosthetic' construction of identity, and especially gender identity, on the early modern stage.[22] Building on these past studies, this essay takes these writings against performance, cosmetics and cross-dressing as examples of the anti-prosthetic discourse that Lyly refutes in *The Woman in the Moon* as part of his comic defence of prosthesis as divinely-sanctioned artificial construction.

Lyly lays the groundwork for his defence of prosthesis by presenting the creation of Pandora as an ambiguously prosthetic event. In this regard, the dramatist exploits the biblical and classical creation narratives that comprise his source material.[23] For example, in the opening scene of the play, Nature agrees to make a woman for four Utopian shepherds who 'bewail their want of female sex' (1. 1. 50). This motivation for the making of Pandora draws on Genesis, in which God makes Eve because Adam finds that, in the Garden of Eden, 'he had not a helpe mete for him'; a marginal gloss in the Geneva Bible adds that 'mankinde' became 'perfitt, when woman was created'.[24] To an extent Pandora and Eve are therefore made as prosthetic 'additions' to pre-existing male bodies, and are also prostheses in the later, eighteenth-century sense of a 'replacement of

defective or absent parts of the body by artificial substitutes' (*OED*).[25] In both texts, the making of these women complicates their prosthetic status, although in different ways. Eve is neither 'artificial', nor a 'replacement' as such, as she is fashioned from Adam's rib and so is also already a part of the body that she supplements.[26] In *The Woman in the Moon*, meanwhile, Lyly diverges significantly from his biblical source in order to present Pandora's creation as the product of a combination of organic, elemental processes and acts of artificial construction.

Lyly's deviations from Genesis begin with the fact that Pandora is not 'the secondary byproduct of a spare rib framed between her two male authority figures', but starts life as a 'lifeless image' made and then animated by three female figures (1. 1. 57).[27] This animation takes place in Nature's '*shop*', with the assistance of personifications of Concord and Discord, whom we might think of as workshop apprentices (1. 1. 56SD-57). Before bringing the new woman to life, Nature describes the making of Pandora as an elemental, organic process driven by divine foresight:

> When I arrayed this lifeless image thus,
> It was decreed in my deep providence
> To make it such as our Utopians crave,
> A mirror of the earth, and heaven's despite.
> The matter first, when it was void of form,
> Was purest water, earth, and air, and fire;
> And when I shaped it in a matchless mould
> (Whereof the like was never seen before)
> It grew to this impression that you see,
> And wanteth nothing now but life and soul.

So, hold it fast, till with my quickening breath
I kindle inward seeds of sense and mind.
Now fire be turned to choler, air to blood,
Water to humour purer than itself,
And earth to flesh more clear than crystal rock. (1. 1. 57-72)

This account of the making of Pandora combines allusions to natural and artificial processes in a manner that reflects orthodox accounts of divine creation and the constitution of natural bodies. The composition of the image from elemental matter reflects the theory 'that the human body is made of four primary "humours" or fluids, corresponding to the four elements'.[28] That Nature brings the image to life with 'quickening breath' echoes God's similar animation of Adam with the 'breath of life' in Genesis.[29] Nature's use of a 'mould' here invokes artificial construction, but this point of reference does not necessarily detract from the divinity of the process described. Moulds were used by early modern sculptors working in bronze, plaster, clay and wax; materials 'thought to retain the potency of the earth, the first divine creation'.[30] Allusions to moulds also form part of a conventional early modern discourse in which God is figured as an artisan, as when Calvin states that to be renewed by God as a spiritual body at the general resurrection is to be 'cast in a newe mould'.[31] This figuring of divine creation also intersects with the early modern view that artifice is a product of nature, as in Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* (1611), where, defending horticultural grafting, the Bohemian king Polixenes states that 'art itself is nature'.[32] Famously, Shakespeare concludes this play with a scene in which a statue of a woman appears to come to life amidst assurances that this event is 'lawful' and unassisted by 'wicked powers'.[33] In contrast, Lyly begins his play with a depiction of the animation of the image of a woman that mingles allusions to artificial and natural, organic processes in a reflection of orthodox discourses on divine creativity.

In an Elizabethan context, however, the circumstances of Pandora's making complicate the extent to which Nature's processes can be understood as 'innocent' reflections of conventional discourses on creation and the divinity of artifice. Here, Lyly draws on the myth of Pygmalion as told in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* to present the making of Pandora as a provocatively prosthetic event, and to permit the introduction of 'anti-prosthetic' views into the play. For Elizabethan viewers, the depiction of the animation of a sculpture of a woman in a sculptor's workshop would recall the Ovidian story in which Pygmalion makes an 'ivory' statue of a woman as a replacement for 'womenkind', whose sinful behaviour he finds offensive.[34] Infatuated with the statue, Pygmalion prays, successfully, for it to be animated.[35] In an Elizabethan view, this myth tells of the ritualistic, lust-driven transformation of a prosthetic idol made as a replacement for living bodies. Texts from this period often associate Pygmalion with both idolatry and sexual transgression. For example, in *The Metamorphosis of Pigmalions Image* (1598), John Marston teases readers' 'lecherous' expectation of explicit sexual detail while comparing Pygmalion's devotion to his statue to the behaviour of 'peeusih Papists' who 'kneele / To some dum Idoll'.[36] Lyly plays on the erotic overtones of the Pygmalion myth in his depiction of Nature's shop, which is described in a detailed stage direction. Here, Concord and Discord retrieve the image that becomes Pandora:

> *They draw the curtains from before Natures shop, where stands an Image clad, and some unclad.*
>
> *They bring forth the clothed image.*
>
> (1. 1. 56SD)

In an earlier play, *Campaspe* (1584), Lyly presents a visual artist's workshop as the scene of socially transgressive desire.[37] Similarly, the array of 'unclad' images in Nature's shop emphasises the correspondence between the creation of Pandora and the eroticised idolatry of the making of Pygmalion's image. Given this setting, allusions to the use of a

'mould' to make Pandora refer to idolatrous modes of artificial construction as much as to conventional accounts of divine creation. Similarly, the spectacle of the animation of Pandora indicates dangerous ritual as much as it alludes to divine, organic coming-into-being. Significantly, the theme of Pandora as an object of transgressive desire continues across the play. For example, Jupiter offers his 'love' to the new woman, prompting Juno to argue that his 'lust but looks for strumpet stars below' (2. 1. 35-57). Venus influences Pandora so as to make her be 'amorous' and banish 'chastity and modest thoughts', while the shepherds deceive one another in the fight for the newly-created woman's attentions (3. 2. 2-16). Lyly's use of the Pygmalion myth thus frames Pandora as an artificial, idolatrous figure who provokes sexual transgression and so reflects early modern anxieties about the 'illicit' implications of the artificial supplementation of natural bodies.[38]

An allusion to Ovid therefore signals the first instance in the play of the introduction of 'anti-prosthetic' voices that, as I will argue, the drama refutes. A further such instance is Lyly's exploitation of Hesiod's Pandora myth, which, to an extent, informs Nature's account of the making of Pandora from elemental matter.[39] In Hesiod's myth, the gods supplement Pandora's elemental body with divine attributes given as gifts. Zeus, for example, orders Minerva 'to confer' her own 'Bewitchings' on Pandora's 'countenance' and 'Browe', while 'stuffing' Pandora's 'Breast, / With wild Desires, incapable of Rest'.[40] Mercury, Pallas and Hermes also 'confer' their 'seuerall gifts' on Pandora, who is equipped, famously, with a 'Box' filled 'With all the Gods plagues'.[41] Hesiod's Pandora is therefore produced collaboratively by the gods as part of Zeus's plan to take revenge on mankind and Prometheus following the latter's theft of fire.[42] In contrast, Lyly's Pandora does not have the famous 'box': instead, her body is the instrument of chaos because it is a site of prosthetic supplementation, adorned with divine attributes that have not been given willingly by the planets. As Nature explains,

she has 'robbed' the planets and 'endowed' Pandora 'with Saturn's deep conceit' and other properties including a 'tongue more eloquent than Mercury's', as well as 'Juno's arms, /Aurora's hands, and lovely Thetis' foot' (1. 1. 95-104). In Hesiod, the divine supplementation of Pandora's body is designed as an attack on men; in Lyly's play, Nature undertakes this theft of divine qualities and body parts in order to 'darken' the planets' 'prides' (1. 1. 121). In this shift from 'gifts' intended to harm mankind to stolen properties intended to harm heavenly bodies, prosthetic supplementation becomes an act that undermines the integrity of divinity. Furthermore, given the divinity of earthly creation in early modern thought, this assault on the planets echoes what Wills identifies as the period's fear that prosthesis 'represents the monstrosity of interfering with the integrity of the human body'.[43] Indeed, the effect of Nature's desecration of the planets is the distortion of Pandora's body, as it prompts Jupiter, Juno, Mars, Sol, Venus, Saturn, Mercury and Luna to 'bend' their 'forces' against the new woman in retaliation, 'corrupting … her purest blood', making 'war within' her 'breast', bringing her to the brink of suicide, and prompting one shepherd to attempt to '*kill*' her (1. 1. 134-45; 2. 1. 178; 4. 1. 191SD; 5. 1. 256SD). Prosthesis is here the source of the corruption of heavenly and earthly bodies and the cause of cosmic discord.

Significantly, the planets' outraged comments on Pandora correspond with attacks by Wilson, Gosson, Stubbes and Tuke on prosthesis as an artificial, idolatrous other. The planets interpret Pandora's body as a site of deceitful, idolatrous artificial construction. Jupiter, for example, declares Pandora 'the saint that steals my Juno's arms' (1. 1. 113). For an Elizabethan audience, the statement that Pandora is a 'saint' who fraudulently bears the markings of a deity would register as an accusation that this character is an idolatrous false representation of the sort associated in the Protestant imagination with the use of images of the saints in Catholic worship.[44] In this view, Pandora's stolen attributes make her an artificial, false god that in turn defaces 'true'

heavenly bodies. Elsewhere, Juno calls the newly created woman a 'shameless counterfeit' with 'painted plumes', and Saturn states that Pandora is a 'new-found gaud' (2. 1. 64-5; 1. 1. 109). As noted above, Gosson attacks the 'counterfeit' nature of players; Tuke, similarly, refers to cosmetics as 'countefeite deuises'.[45] Stubbes, meanwhile, uses terms that resemble Juno's condemnation of Pandora when he declares that 'painted faces' are 'inticements to vices', and attacks men who are 'gallantly painted, or curiously plumed in the deceiptfull feathers of pride'.[46] In their objections to Pandora as a 'gaud' with a dangerously provocative ornamental appearance, the planets echo the anxieties about prosthesis expressed by the anti-theatrical and anti-cosmetic writers. A reading of the play based on this evidence alone could conclude that *The Woman in the Moon* reflects concerns about the place of the 'construction of the artificial within the origin itself' that Wills identifies as so troubling for early modern English Protestants.[47]

To include a set of discourses in a play, however, is not necessarily to endorse that set of discourses. Early modern dramatists often exploit the self-reflexive nature of their medium in order to critique moralising attacks on performance.[48] It is in this vein that Lyly presents 'anti-prosthetic' voices in *The Woman in the Moon* in order to mock them. This mockery functions as a defence of performance, but Lyly also uses it to generate more complex, critical approaches to the role of artifice in our understanding of origins. To exemplify this point, it is worth returning here in more detail to Nature's account of her theft of the planets' attributes. Nature tells her new creation:

Thou art endowed with Saturn's deep conceit,
Thy mind as haught as Jupiter's high thoughts,
Thy stomach lion-like, like Mars's heart,
Thine eyes bright-beamed, like Sol in his array,
Thy cheeks more fair than are fair Venus' cheeks,

Thy tongue more eloquent than Mercury's,
Thy forehead whiter than the silver Moon's.
Thus have I robbed the planets for thy sake.
Besides all this, thou hast proud Juno's arms,
Aurora's hands, and lovely Thetis' foot. (1. 1. 95-104)

Lyly structures this list of prosthetic attachments so as to provoke spectators to laughter rather than the alarm experienced by the planets. The list descends from lofty references to qualities such as 'Saturn's deep conceit' and 'Jupiter's high thoughts' to more prosaic, hurried allusions to 'arms', 'hands' and a 'foot'. As Leah Scragg notes, following R. Warwick Bond, these references to deific body parts are 'Homeric epiphets' and provide 'indices of outstanding beauty', but at the same time, this jumbled list parodies the Petrarchan motif of the blazon, and so undercuts the aesthetic effect of the dissection of heavenly beauty.[49] Moreover, Lyly gestures humorously towards the possibility that this 'theft' from the planets is in part a literal theft. Nature specifies that some of Pandora's heavenly adornments, such as her mind, stomach, eyes, tongue and forehead, are imitations, 'like', or 'more' impressive than the heavenly equivalents from which they derive. Notably, however, Nature does not specify that she gives Pandora an imitation of 'Saturn's deep conceit', or that the stolen arms, hands and feet are copies of the originals rather than the actual originals. Jupiter's claim that Pandora is a 'saint' that 'steals' his wife's 'arms' therefore registers as a comically literal complaint, and a parody of anti-prosthetic outrage, rather than a serious point about the abuse of divine bodies in the context of image-making (1. 1. 113).

Lyly's comic attack on the planets contributes to the play's more extended mockery of naïve, literal interpretations of divine corporeality and creation. Lyly's critique of literalism in this context is analogous to Calvinist thought on the means by which we imagine and describe God. In particular, *The Woman in the Moon* can be

contextualised with reference to Calvinist deployment of the 'principle of accommodation', which justifies the use of allusions to corporeality and earthly practices in accounts of divinity.[50] According to this principle, God, who is beyond comprehension, makes himself available to us through 'a secondary realm of signification', or 'the signs that we read in the world around us'.[51] Examples of accommodation include allusions to God as an artisan who uses a 'mould', or as a figure who has 'a mouthe, ears, eyes, handes and feete'.[52] These allusions work only if we understand their limitations, as Calvin explains:

> For what man yea though he be slenderly witted dooth not vnderstande that God dooth so with vs speake as it were childishly, as nurses doo with their babes? Therefore suche maners of speeche doo not so playnely expresse what God is, as they do apply the vnderstandyng of him to our slender capacitie.[53]

Here, Calvin clarifies that we must recognise the difference between divinity and the language that makes it possible to speak of divinity, which is adapted to our 'slender', and childlike understanding. In this view, language becomes a kind of prop – a prosthesis – that facilitates access to God and thus plays a valuable role in spiritual experience, so long as its limitations are understood. Hence, when comparing God to an artisan in accounts of the making of spiritual bodies, theologians do not attempt to stretch the point too far. In a sermon of 1611, for example, Thomas Draxe addresses the question of how God locates and selects the decomposed matter of the bodies of the elect for use in the production of their spiritual bodies:

> [a] cunning and skilfull Goldsmith can by his Art and skill single, sunder and distinguish, gold, siluer, copper, pewter, brasse and other mettalls, whether in the same mountaine mingled, or, accidentally melted and confounded together; and some out of one mettall can draw an other: and shall not, and cannot much more God almightie, finde out each mans substance, & distinguish it from the dust of

> beasts, and from the dust of other men, and out of it produce and forme a perfit and glorious bodie?[54]

Draxe does not use this 'similitude' between God and a goldsmith to describe divine processes of creation, which are here left highly ambiguous, but rather to indicate that we should have faith in divine processes of making that are beyond comprehension.[55]

The Woman in the Moon does not refer directly to this theological discourse, but it echoes in Lyly's mockery of the literalism of the planets' horrified reactions to Pandora, and in the evasiveness of aspects of the play's depiction of divine creation. The dramatist's portrayal of the making of Pandora is littered with ambiguities that ensure that his play cannot be misinterpreted as an idolatrous claim to comprehend divine creation. For example, Nature shapes the 'lifeless image' that becomes Pandora offstage, before the timescale of the play, and so although Nature has a sculptor's shop and refers to sculpting techniques, Lyly's audience never sees her working in this artisanal fashion (1. 1. 57). The precise, practical means by which Nature supplements Pandora's body with divine body parts is also unexplained: Nature merely announces that the transmission of these attributes has taken place. This ambiguity adds to the comic tone of Nature's account of her theft of heavenly limbs, but it also mitigates against the possibility that spectators might take literally the play's allusions to divine corporeality. In particular, these gaps in the audience's understanding of Nature's creative processes highlight the limitations of Lyly's – and his audience's – knowledge of the making of 'natural' bodies and therefore the relation of those bodies to artifice.

Lyly's careful management of audience members' knowledge plays an important role in the mockery of anti-prosthetic discourse in *The Woman in the Moon*. While the play calls attention to the limitations to spectators' comprehension of divine creation, those spectators occupy a position of knowledge superior to that of the planets. Lyly's audience witness Pandora's animation, and hear at least vague details about Nature's creative

practices. In contrast, the planets enter the play's action immediately after Pandora has been brought to life, and are not present during Nature's explanation of the attributes with which Pandora is 'endowed' (1. 1. 95). Having heard and seen far more about Pandora's creation than the planets, the audience is equipped to spot the significant errors in these characters' responses to the new woman. For example, Saturn declares that Pandora is 'A second man, less perfect than the first', and therefore assumes that she is a secondary version of 'man', as is Eve in Genesis (1. 1. 110). Lyly's audience, however, have seen that this creation myth differs significantly from the biblical text, since Pandora is made from elemental matter by three female figures, rather than from the body of man by a God who is gendered masculine. In a further example, Mars declares that Pandora has been 'made in haste / To rob us planets of our ornaments' (1. 1. 111-12). Mars is correct regarding the robbery, but spectators know that Pandora has not been 'made in haste', having witnessed the carefully stage-managed, ritualistic event of her making, facilitated by Nature's advance preparation of a 'lifeless image', because 'it was decreed' in her 'deep providence / To make it such as our Utopians crave' (1. 1. 58-9). Saturn and Mars's outraged assessments of Pandora therefore register as erroneous, presumptuous claims to understand the works of their maker.

The play as a whole, moreover, is structured around the planets' misinterpretation of Nature's actions. The planets fail to realise that Nature has made Pandora to be 'heaven's despite', a phrase that Scragg glosses as 'object of heavenly resentment' (1. 1. 60).[56] When the planets react with anger on first sight of the new woman and her stolen attributes, Nature rebukes their 'foul contempt', informs them that Pandora is 'framed to darken all your prides', and asks:

> Ordained not I your motions, and yourselves?
>
> And dare you check the author of your lives?
>
> Were not your lights contrived in Nature's shop? (1. 1. 18-24)

Very early in the play, therefore, Lyly emphasises that Nature is the creator of all, including the planets, who were 'contrived' in the same context as Pandora. When the planets respond to the challenge posed by Pandora by asserting influence over the new creation so as to cause chaos in Utopia, they merely prove Nature's original point, that they have lost sight of their indebtedness to her as the author of their lives. From this perspective, it is not the prosthetic supplementation of Pandora's body that causes chaos in *The Woman in the Moon*: instead, it is the planets' idolatrous assumption that they understand this prosthetic supplementation. Since the planets' speeches in this play echo the 'anti-prosthetic' rhetoric of figures such as Wilson, Gosson, Stubbes and Tuke, it is possible to argue that *The Woman in the Moon* parodies early modern anxieties about the corrupting effect of artificial construction on 'natural' bodies and consequently earthly relations with the divine. In turn, this parody demonstrates to Lyly's audience the limitations of their knowledge of divinity and endorses artifice as the means by which to navigate those limitations.

Lyly's endorsement of prosthesis as a performance of beginnings that facilitates access to divinity provides a stark counterpoint to Wills' narrative of Protestant alarm at prosthesis as the sign of the failure to return to 'a form of divine presence that preceded figural representation'.[57] In addition, Lyly's defence of prosthesis in *The Woman in the Moon* calls into question the association between this figure and tropes of otherness that dominates early modern 'anti-prosthetic' writing, and Wills' influential reading of prosthesis. In particular, Lyly's play disrupts articulations of the referentiality of prosthesis in terms of sexual transgression and 'promiscuity'.[58] The trope of prosthesis as a figure of sexual incontinence can be understood as an extension of the association between 'the difference involved in heterosexuality' and 'fallen image-making' found in strains of Elizabethan iconoclastic thought.[59] In this view, the limitations of postlapsarian language are the product of original sin. Since Eve was often blamed for the fall, early

modern texts frequently figure women as the source of the referential fracture of language. Lyly draws on this idea in his depiction of the making of Pandora, as in order to give the new woman speech, Nature orders Discord to 'unloose' Pandora's 'tongue', and states that 'from that root will many mischiefs grow / If once she spot her state of innocence' (1. 1. 83-6).[60] Although *The Woman in the Moon* is therefore implicated in the circulation of these misogynistic discourses, the play nonetheless undercuts the link between image-making and sexual difference that underpins the figuring of prosthesis as the site of idolatry and adultery.

The relevance of sexual difference for our understanding of prosthesis collapses in *The Woman in the Moon* because Lyly repeatedly associates the divine-artificial making and supplementation of Pandora with images of sameness. For example, at the beginning of the play, Nature claims that the new woman will be 'like' the Utopian shepherds, 'but of a purer mould' (1. 1. 52). This claim indicates that Pandora will be made in the image of men, but in such a way as maintains difference to them, and makes her available for sexual reproduction. So far, the making of Pandora equates mimesis with sexual difference. When Nature turns to her 'shop' to complete the creation process, however, this equation begins to dissolve. It is worth recalling, for example, that the 'mould' which Nature uses to make Pandora is 'matchless … / (Whereof the like was never seen before)' (1. 1. 63-4). The matchless newness of Pandora's mould contradicts Nature's earlier assertion of the new woman's similarity to the shepherds, as does her allusion to Pandora as 'a mirror of the earth' and account of her production from elemental, organic matter (1. 1. 60). Furthermore, as noted above, the animation of Pandora with Nature's 'quickening breath' parallels the making of Adam in Genesis (1. 1. 68). In this way, Lyly frames Pandora as an original creation that imitates only the divine. Pandora's Adam-like originality means that she is made without reference to men in the context of the playworld. That Nature's purpose in making Pandora is revealed to be revenge on the

planets rather than the provision of a mate for the shepherds further disconnects her from sexual difference, as does the fact of her creation by three female characters in the absence of the shepherds or any other male figures. Finally, Lyly presents the desire and jealousy that Pandora provokes as products of a cosmos that fails to understand the nature of its own creation. Lyly's depiction of the making of Pandora as a prosthetic figure thus detaches prosthesis from contexts and concerns shaped by notions of sexual difference and transgression.

The planets' failure of understanding in this play can now be described more precisely as a refusal to recognise the sameness that they share with Pandora as 'contrived', divine-artificial products (1. 1. 124). This material connection between Pandora and the planets is evidenced by the play's conclusion. Here, Pandora undergoes a further prosthetic transformation, as Nature orders that the new woman be 'placed' in one of the 'seven' planets (5. 1. 276). Pandora selects Luna, and so ends the play as the woman in the moon. At this point in the play, Lyly draws on the myth of the man in the moon, a folk 'fable' based on the resemblance between 'geographical features visible on the surface of the moon', and 'the figure of a man, bearing a thorn bush on his back, and accompanied, in some traditions, by a dog'.[61] Pandora is a prosthetic attachment to Luna, in that she serves as a replacement for the moon, ruling in the planet's 'stead' so that Luna may perform her alternative roles, as 'Cynthia', 'Diana' and 'Hecate' (5. 1. 302-4).[62] Lyly here alters his source material so as to situate prosthesis in a context of sameness, reflected by the fact that both characters are female and divine-artificial products of Nature. This image of sameness is tainted by misogyny, as Nature expresses the union between Pandora and Luna in terms associated in this period with attacks on women's inconstancy:

> Now rule, Pandora, in fair Cynthia's stead,
>
> And make the moon inconstant like thyself.

> Reign thou at women's nuptials, and their birth;
> Let them be mutable in all their loves,
> Fantastical, childish, and foolish in their desires,
> Demanding toys,
> And stark mad when they cannot have their will. (5. 1. 326-32).[63]

Nature here envisages the prosthetic creation of Pandora and her attachment to Luna as the source of the corruption of the integrity of future female bodies. We are to an extent returned again to a vision of prosthesis as 'promiscuity' that, notably, is set to multiply across generations of women.[64] Although at its conclusion Lyly's play therefore does not entirely refute the terms of 'anti-prosthetic' discourse, this final image of Pandora as the prosthetic corrupter of corporeal and moral integrity is unstable. It is not clear that Pandora alone is the prosthetic source of corruption, since she chooses to join Luna because, during the course of the play, the moon 'made' her 'idle, mutable, / Forgetful, foolish, fickle, frantic, mad', and these are 'the humours that content' Pandora 'best' (5. 1. 313-15). Pandora's prosthetic intervention into Luna's behaviour thus coincides with Luna's earlier, similar interventions into Pandora's behaviour, which, in turn, are prompted by Pandora's prosthetic construction, which, finally, is designed to remind the planets of their own artifice. Lyly once more associates prosthesis with sameness, in this instance because the beginning and end of Pandora and Luna's mutual influence is indiscernible except in that both are prosthetic products of Nature.

Lyly's play thus presents an alternative vision of prosthesis to that offered by Wilson and Wills on two counts. Firstly, because *The Woman in the Moon* reveals that the performative artificiality of prosthesis is the product of divinity and the only means of accessing divinity. Secondly, because this revelation of the divinity of prosthesis entails its detachment from tropes of otherness that articulate alarm and anxiety in writings by Wilson, Wills and in 'anti-prosthetic' discourse. It might, at this point, be reasonable to

ask how isolated Lyly's alternative view of prosthesis is in sixteenth-century thought. After all, the playwright has a professional investment in the defence of performance as a prosthetic practice. Significantly, a return to definitions of prosthesis as a grammatical figure reveals that Lyly's lack of anxiety about the natural-artificial status of prosthesis is not an isolated example.

Wilson's definition for prosthesis is not the earliest reference to this term in the English language. The earliest example that I have been able to find is in Sir Thomas Elyot's Latin-English dictionary of 1538. Here, a translation of 'prosthesis' is accompanied by a brief, practical example of its application:

> Prosthesis, an addicion of a lettre, as gnatus, for natus.[65]

As the *Dictionary* explains elsewhere, 'natus' means 'borne', and so invokes an original, organic moment of coming-into-being antithetical to the artificial 'addicion' described by the term prosthesis.[66] Through this antithesis, Elyot shows that grammatical prosthesis performs the starting point of a word, but, in practice, comes into being in the wake of that which it precedes. Like Lyly, Elyot therefore interprets prosthetic supplementation as an artificial performance of beginnings that is the product of the 'natural' origin that it necessarily obscures. In turn, just as Lyly finds prosthesis to be a figure of sameness due to its divine and 'natural' origins, the antithesis between artifice and nature in Elyot's example collapses as nature is revealed to generate prosthetic artifice. Finally, where Lyly defends prosthesis through the depiction of female acts of creation, Elyot explains this figure with reference to the performance of an action associated with women's bodies. In Wills' reading of Wilson, the troubling otherness of prosthesis is framed in terms of corruption – 'illicit couplings' – deriving from sexual difference.[67] Lyly's play and Elyot's *Dictionary* do not endorse or invite such anxiety about prosthesis as a figure of gendered otherness.

Together, *The Woman in the Moon* and the *Dictionary* present a very different view of sixteenth-century prosthesis to that proposed by Wills through his heavy reliance on *The Art of Rhetorique*. If Wilson's allusion to prosthesis articulates an Edwardian Protestant dislike of rhetorical ornament, then Elyot and Lyly's texts, produced at very different historical moments, demonstrate the wider availability across the sixteenth century of an alternative perspective on prosthesis. Elyot translates 'prosthesis' while a religious conservative loyal to Henry VIII in the very earliest years of the English Reformation.[68] His lack of emphasis on the otherness of this figure reflects its inclusion as just one of many Latin words translated in a humanist, political text that promotes Henrician intellectual culture, 'Tudor absolutism and English nationalism'.[69] Lyly, meanwhile, writes at the latter end of the century and the reign of Elizabeth I, in a manner that, as I have argued, echoes a Calvinist worldview.[70] These examples are products of specific historical contexts, and we cannot interpret Elyot and Lyly's 'alternative' attitude to prosthesis as an ahistorical, politically progressive rejection of markers of difference. The narrative of early modern prosthesis that these different texts present, however, encourages us to reconfigure the terms of our twenty-first century discourse on prosthesis.

In particular, this early modern evidence urges a rethinking of the place of notions of difference and otherness in critical work in this area. For example, in a more recent work on technology and the body, Wills argues 'for the origin as prosthetic'.[71] Lyly and Elyot's allusions to prosthetic yet 'natural' origins to an extent accord with this view, but the sixteenth-century writers' lack of anxiety about the place of artificiality in accounts of origins differs from the critical position adopted by Wills. In his argument, Wills builds on a literal reading of Freud's account of 'the dwelling house' as a 'substitute for the mother's womb', in which there is 'no structural distinction … between

prosthetic supplements to the human and natural occurrences of the human'.[72] Wills couples this Freudian evidence with a telling allusion to the making of Pandora:

> When it comes to woman, at least the Pandora fashioned by Hephaestus, the mother of us all and the bearer of our womb-home is explicitly understood as … artistic production or technological artifice … however human we become, we do not for all that shake off the mythological heritage of artificial creation … The home back behind us all is an artificial construct.[73]

As Wills reads the Pandora myth through Freud, the artifice of the creation of woman becomes a site of anxiety which 'we' will wish to 'shake off', and reject. Watching Lyly's treatment of the same myth in *The Woman in the Moon* in the late sixteenth century, Elizabethan audiences were encouraged to embrace this sense of artifice as the only means by which to understand origins. In a twenty-first century Freudian framework, in contrast, Wills' prosthesis remains a figure of specifically sexual anxiety, expressed in a parallel between the intermingling of the 'natural into the unnatural' signalled by artificial origins, and 'the supposedly monstrous perversions of natural relations that are infanticide, incest, and parricide'.[74] A Freudian reading of *The Woman in the Moon* or Elyot's definition for prosthesis may well elicit similar conclusions. By looking at these texts in historical context, however, it is possible to discern the erosion of connections between prosthesis, sexual transgression, and fearfully provocative, ornamental female appearances. This erosion demonstrates that sixteenth-century contexts do not always invite us to emphasise otherness in our approaches to prosthesis. Instead, historical studies can offer ways of seeing prosthesis that loosen the frameworks of difference through which we understand this figure.

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Acknowledgements

I have presented versions of this paper at the University of Sussex and the Renaissance Society of America annual meeting in Berlin, and am grateful to participants at those seminars for their comments and suggestions. Thank you also to Andy Kesson for commenting on my interpretation of *The Woman in the Moon*: aspects of the evidence discussed here are explored (although not in relation to prosthesis) in a forthcoming issue of *Shakespeare Studies Forum* edited by Kesson. I am also grateful to the anonymous reviewer at *Textual Practice* for their helpful and incisive comments.

Notes

[1] David Wills, *Prosthesis* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), pp. 220-3. The *OED* currently cites an example in Richard Sherry's *A Treatise of Schemes & Tropes* (1550) as the earliest known usage of 'prosthesis' in English.

[2] Wills, *Prosthesis*, p. 228.

[3] Ibid., pp. 226, 232.

[4] Ibid., p. 249.

[5] Susan Doran, Jonathan Woolfson, 'Wilson, Thomas (1523/4–1581)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2008 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/29688, accessed10 May 2016]; Diarmaid MacCulloch, *The Boy King: Edward VI and the Protestant Reformation* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1999), p. 8. See also John Phillips, *The Reformation of Images: The Destruction of Art in England, 1535-1660* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1973), p. 99.

[6] See Leah Scragg, 'The Victim of Fashion? Rereading the Biography of John Lyly', *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England*, 19 (2006), pp. 210-26.

[7] John Lyly, *The Woman in the Moon*, ed. Leah Scragg, The Revels Plays Companion Library (Manchester: Manchester University Press. 2003), Prologus, 5. All subsequent references are to this edition.

[8] Wills, *Prosthesis*, p. 247.

[9] Wilson was 'the best known classical rhetorician among the Tudors', Arthur F. Kinney, *Humanist Poetics: Thought, Rhetoric and Fiction in Sixteenth-century England* (Amherst: University of Massachusettes Press, 1986), p. 115.

[10] Stuart Clark, *Vanities of the Eye: Vision in Early Modern European Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 163; see also Alain Besançon, *The Forbidden Image: An Intellectual History of Iconoclasm*, trans. Jane Marie Todd (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2000), p. 69.

[11] Stephen Gosson, *Playes Confuted in Fiue Actions* (London: Thomas Gosson, 1582), E5r. Gosson draws on St Thomas Aquinas' account of lying, as in *Summa Theologiae, Volume 41, Virtues of Justice in the Human Community*, ed. T. C. O'Brien (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), pp. 156-7.

[12] Gosson, *Playes Confuted*, E5r.

[13] Ibid., G7r.

[14] Thomas Tuke, *A Discourse Against Painting and Tincturing of Women* (London: Edward Marchant, 1616), D2v.

[15] Farah Karim-Cooper, *Cosmetics in Shakespearean and Renaissance Drama* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), pp. 40-1.

[16] See Besançon, *The Forbidden Image*, p. 69; Wills, *Prosthesis*, pp. 225, 228.

[17] Tuke, *A Discourse Against Painting*, D2v.

[18] Gosson, *Playes Confuted*, G8v.

[19] Ibid., C3v.

[20] Phillip Stubbes, *The Anatomie of Abuses* (London: Richard Jones, 1583), F6r.

[21] Gosson, *Playes Confuted*, E5r; Will Fisher, *Materializing Gender in Early Modern English Literature and Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 86.

[22] See Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 208, 214; see also Fisher, *Materializing Gender*, pp. 87, 170.

[23] On sources for this play, see Scragg (ed.), *The Woman in the Moon*, pp. 9-15.

[24] *The Bible and Holy Scriptures Conteined in the Olde and Newe Testament* (Geneva: Rowland Hall, 1560), Genesis II. 18, f. 1v.

[25] Ibid., Genesis II. 18, f. 1v.

[26] I discuss the making of Eve and notions of corporeal 'wholeness', in *Making and Unmaking in Early Modern English Drama: Spectators, aesthetics and incompletion* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), pp. 67-71.

[27] Andy Kesson, "'It is a pity you are not a woman": John Lyly and the Creation of Woman', *Shakespeare Bulletin* 33 (2015), pp. 33-47 (40).

[28] Scragg (ed.), *The Woman in the Moon*, 1. 1. 70-2n.

[29] *The Bible and Holy Scriptures*, Genesis II. 7, f. 1v.

[30] Eckhart Marchand, 'Material Distinctions: Plaster, Terracotta, and Wax in the Renaissance Artist's Workshop', in Christy Anderson, Anne Dunlop and Pamela H. Smith (eds.),*The Matter of Art: Materials, Practices, Cultural Logistics, c. 1250-1750* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2014), pp.160-79 (170); Christy Anderson, Anne Dunlop, Pamela H. Smith, 'Introduction', in *The Matter of Art*, pp. 1-17 (9).

[31] Jean Calvin, *The Sermons of Mr. John Calvin vpon the Fifthe boooke of Deuteronomie*, trans. Arthur Golding (London: Henry Middleton for George Bishop, 1583), p. 299. Calvin refers to Romans 6. 4, and Ephesians, 4. 23-4.

[32] William Shakespeare, *The Winter's Tale*, in *The Norton Shakespeare*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt et al., 2nd edition (New York: W. W. Norton, 2008), 4. 4. 90-7. See also my *Making and Unmaking in Early Modern English Drama*, pp. 80-1.

[33] Shakespeare, *The Winter's Tale*, 5. 3. 91-105.

[34] Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. Arthur Golding, ed. Madeleine Forey (London: Penguin, 2002), ll. 261-3.

[35] Ibid., ll. 300-16.

[36] Gabriel A. Rieger, *Sex and Satiric Tragedy in Early Modern England: Penetrating Wit* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), pp. 19-22; John Marston, *The Metamorphosis of Pigmalions Image. And Certain Satyres* (London: Edmond Matts, 1598), p. 7. See also Jane Kingsley-Smith, *Cupid in Early Modern Literature and Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 42.

[37] See John Lyly *Campaspe*, ed. G.K. Hunter, in *Campaspe: Sappho and Phao*, ed. G.K. Hunter and David Bevington, The Revels Plays (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991).

[38] Wills, *Prosthesis*, p. 228.

[39] In George Chapman's translation of Hesiod, Zeus orders Hephaestus to 'mingle instantly, with Water, Earth; / The voyce, and vigor, of a humane birth', *The Georgicks of Hesiod* (London: H. L. for Miles Partrich, 1618), p. 4.

[40] Ibid., pp. 4-5.

[41] Ibid., p. 5.

[42] Ibid., pp. 3-4.

[43] Wills, *Prosthesis*, p. 247.

[44] On the attack on images of the saints in the Reformation and the Elizabethan religious settlement, see Phillips, *The Reformation of Images*, pp. 40-1, 53-8, 60-1, 119, 205.

[45] Gosson, *Playes Confuted*, E5r; Tuke, *A discourse*, p. 24.

[46] Stubbes, *The Anatomy of Abuses*, C7v.

[47] Wills, *Prosthesis*, p. 247.

[48] For a well-known example, see Ben Jonson's use of puppets to mock Puritan anti-theatricalism in *Bartholomew Fair*, ed. Suzanne Gossett, Revels Student Editions (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 5. 5. 96-115.

[49] Scragg (ed.), *The Woman in the Moon*, 1. 1. 103-4n. See also R. Warwick Bond (ed.), *The Complete Works of John Lyly*, Vol. 3 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1902), p. 556.

[50] Adrian Streete, *Protestantism and Drama in Early Modern England*, p. 91.

[51] Ibid., p. 92.

[52] Calvin, *The Sermons of Mr. John Calvin*, p. 299; Jean Calvin, *The Institution of the Christian Religion* (London: Reinolde Wolfe and Richarde Harrison, 1561), f.30.

[53] Calvin, *The Institution of the Christian Religion*, f. 30.

[54] Thomas Draxe, *The Earnest of our Inheritance* (London: Felix Kingston for George Norton, 1613), p. 54.

[55] Ibid.

[56] Scragg (ed.), *The Woman in the Moon*, 1. 1. 60n.

[57] Wills, *Prosthesis*, p. 232.

[58] Ibid., p. 169.

[59] Phebe Jensen, *Religion and Revelry in Shakespeare's Festive World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 213 and n. 67.

[60] See Scragg (ed.), *The Woman in the Moon*, p. 13.

[61] Ibid., p. 12.

[62] Ibid., 5. 1. 287-90n.

[63] On the play's misogyny, see Scragg (ed.), *The Woman in the Moon*, pp. 12-13.

[64] Wills, *Prosthesis*, pp. 141, 169.

[65] Sir Thomas Elyot, *The Dictionary of Syr Thomas Elyot* (London: Thomas Powell, 1538), T4r.

[66] Elyot, *Dictionary*, O4r.

[67] Wills, *Prosthesis*, p. 228.

[68] See Greg Walker, *Writing Under Tyranny: English Literature and the Henrician Reformation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 3-4, 159.

[69] Stephen Merriam Foley, 'Coming to Terms: Thomas Elyot's Definitions and the Particularity of Human Letters', *ELH*, 61 (1994), pp. 211-30 (211-12).

[70] Little is known of Lyly's religious views, although he did write on the Elizabethan regime's behalf in the religious 'Marprelate' controversy of the early 1590s; see Leah Scragg, 'Angling for Answers: Looking for Lyly in the 1590s', *The Review of English Studies*, New Series, 67: 279 (2015), pp. 237-49 (238).

[71] David Wills, *Dorsality: Thinking Back through Technology and Politics* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), pp. 70-1.

[72] Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and its Discontents*, ed. James Strachey, The International Psycho-analytical Library, 17 (London: Hogarth Press, 1963), p. 38; Wills, *Dorsality*, p. 70.

[73] Wills, *Dorsality*, pp. 69-70.

[74] Ibid., p. 70.